

1 **METHOD OF PRODUCING IRIDESCENT COATINGS**

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of Invention

 This document describes a technology for painting and image printing that utilizes a simple
6 system with multiple colorants and a single printing head through which the image is printed by a
transparent ink or binder. The primary area of interest involves dry pigments of larger molecular
weight colorants, such as cholesteric liquid crystal (CLC) pigments, and their diverse applications
in modern printing and painting. In addition, new techniques can be easily expanded to serve
more functions, such as 3-D stereoscopic image capability.

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Brief Description of the Literature

 Broadband reflecting polarizers were introduced in Application Serial No. 08/550,022
(now US Patent 5,691,789) entitled "Single Layer Reflective Super Broadband Circular Polarizer
and Method of Fabrication Therefor" by Sadeg M. Faris and Le Li which was filed October 30,
16 1995. Such broadband polarizers are made by producing a single layer having cholesteric liquid
crystal order where the pitch of the liquid crystal order varies in a non linear fashion across the
layer.

 General references on polymer dispersed liquid crystals may be found in detail in
"Polymer Dispersed Liquid crystal displays", by J. W. Doane, a chapter in "Liquid Crystals", Ed.
21 B. Bahadur, World Scientific Publishing, Singapore, and "CLC/polymer dispersion for haze -free
light shutters, by D. Yang et al. Appl. Phys. Lett. 60, 3102 (1992).

 Since the early attempt of utilizing cholesteric film as optical filters and the effort on
polymer encapsulated nematic liquid crystals for display, much attention has been focused on
trying to bring polymeric liquid crystals and cholesteric liquid crystals together to make devices
26 for light control application. (See, for example J. Adams, W. Hass, J. Dailey, Journal of Applied
Physics, 1971, and J. L. Fergason, Society for Information Display Digest, 1985.). The above
identified US patents and other references are hereby incorporated by reference .

1 Related cases

 The following applications are related to the present invention: Application Serial No.
9/093,017 filed 6/5/98; Application Serial No. 09/093,006 filed 6/5/98; Application Serial No.
09/039,303 filed 03/14/98; Application Serial No. 09/039,297 filed 03/14/98; Application Serial
6 No. 08/891877 filed 7/09/97 entitled "Reflective Film Material Having Symmetrical Reflection
Characteristics and Method and Apparatus for Making the Same", by Le Li and Sadeg Faris
Application Serial No. 08/739467 filed 10/29/96 entitled "Circularly Polarizing Reflective
Material Having Super Broad-Band Reflecting & Transmission Characteristics & Method of
Fabricating & Using Same in Diverse Applications" by Sadeg M. Faris, Le Li, and Yingqiu Jiang
11 Jiang. Application Serial No. 08/890320 filed 07/09/97 entitled "Coloring Media Having
Improved Brightness and Color Characteristics" by Sadeg M. Faris and Le Li Application Serial
No. 08/805,603 entitled "Electro-optical glazing structures having total-reflection and transparent
modes of operation for use in dynamical control of electromagnetic radiation" by Sadeg M. Faris
and Le Li, filed Feb. 26, 1997, which is a continuation-in-part of: copending Application Serial
16 No. 08/739,467 entitled "Super Broadband Reflective Circularly Polarizing Material And Method
Of Fabricating And Using Same In Diverse Applications", by Sadeg M. Faris and Le Li filed
October 29, 1996, which is a is a Continuation-in-Part of copending Application Serial No.
08/550,022 (Now US Patent 5,691,789) entitled "Single Layer Reflective Super Broadband
Circular Polarizer and Method of Fabrication Therefor" by Sadeg M. Faris and Le Li filed
21 October 30, 1995; copending Application Serial No. 08/787,282 entitled "Cholesteric Liquid
Crystal Inks" by Sadeg M. Faris filed January 24, 1997, which is a Continuation of Application
Serial No. 08/265,949 filed June 2, 1994, which is a Divisional of Application Serial No.
07/798,881 entitled "Cholesteric Liquid Crystal Inks" by Sadeg M. Faris filed November 27,
1991, now US Patent No. 5,364,557; copending application Serial No. 08/715,314 entitled "High-
26 Brightness Color Liquid Crystal Display Panel Employing Systemic Light Recycling And Methods
And Apparatus For Manufacturing The Same" by Sadeg Faris filed September 16, 1996;
copending Application Serial No. 08/743,293 entitled "Liquid Crystal Film Structures With Phase-
Retardation Surface Regions Formed Therein And Methods Of Fabricating The Same" by Sadeg

1 Faris filed November 4, 1996.. Each of the above identified Applications and patents are
commonly assigned to the assignee of the present invention, and are incorporated herein by
reference in their entirety.

INTRODUCTION

6 In modern society, information exchange plays an important role. Efficient methods to
convey information rely on high-quality communication devices. Among them, printing and
painting devices are becoming more and more important. Currently, ink-jet, bubble jet, and laser
printing, along with off-set, flexo press, and screen printing are universally used. All of these
printing techniques possess a common feature. In order to perform color printing, multiple
11 nozzles or screens must be used for cyan, magenta, yellow and black colorants. This forces the
printing system to become mechanically complex and limits the system from being able to be
expanded to serve multiple functions such as the case of 3-D printing. In addition, since the
printing nozzles and screens have a very fine apertures, they can't handle those colorants with
relatively larger pigment particles.

16 Furthermore, it has been known that CLC can be used as a colorant for painting and
printing because of their excellent spectral characteristics and wide color range properties.
However, special techniques must be employed in order to use CLC. Special surface treatments
and curing methods are all necessary to print and dry CLC films. As a result, CLC has never been
practically used in real artwork or other applications. However, the present invention of the new
21 CLC ink based on CLC pigment solves all these problems at once. No special surface treatment
and curing equipment is required to dry and/or cure the colorant. Another benefit is the capability
of generating colorful 3-D stereoscopic images since the CLC ink reflects polarized light.

OBJECTS OF THE PRESENT INVENTION

26 One objective of this invention is to improve today's printing technologies. The inventors
of the present invention have developed a new printing technology that offers a simple system
configuration, greater flexibility, improved printing quality, and enhanced functionality. The new
technique is termed Dry Printing Technology (DPT) by its working principle. It uses only one

1 printing head and prints images with an invisible ink. It can handle, in principle, all kinds of
colorants, even colorants with larger pigments so that it removes the pigment size constraint in
ink jet nozzle printing. By adopting a new printing head combined with CLC pigments, dry
printing offers enhanced image quality. Finally, DPT can be easily expanded to print a colorful
picture in 3-D with the CLC pigments.

6 Another objective is the application of the invented printing technique using a newly
developed, novel colorant to achieve unique display effects that usual technologies do not
possess. The ink is made from CLC pigments mixed into a suitable optically clear carrier.

Yet another objective is to give printing devices more flexibility and enhance their
functionality.

11 Yet another objective is to achieve a special visual effect of objects which appear to have
different colors depending on the viewing angle.

Yet another objective is to create 3-D stereoscopic images in full color at any size.

Yet another objective is to provide security printing

Yet another objective is to provide unique cosmetic effects.

16 Other objects, advantages, and novel features of the present invention will become
apparent from the following detailed description of the invention when considering in conjunction
with the accompanying drawings.

SUMMARY OF THE PRESENT INVENTION

21 The present invention provides a method of using flat flakes of non metallic reflecting
pigment by applying the flakes to a surface and ensuring that the flakes lie substantially parallel to
the surface. A binder material may first be adhered to the surface in a pattern or uniformly. The
flakes are applied to the surface, and stick where the binder has been prepared. The flakes are
applied so that they lie parallel to the surface, or the flakes are applied, then rolled or buffed to
26 align them parallel to the surface. If the flakes are CLC flakes, multilayer polymer flakes, or
multilayer inorganic material flakes, an iridescent film which changes color with viewing angle
may be produced.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 shows a prior art "paint layer".

Fig. 2 shows a pigment material is in the form of flakes.

Fig 3.shows a flow chart of the apparatus of the invention.

Fig. 4 shows an embodiment of the invention.

Fig. 5 shows an embodiment of the invention.

Fig. 6 shows an alternative embodiment of the invention

Fig. 7 is a flow chart of the method of the invention.

Fig. 8 is a flow chart of a preferred embodiment of the invention.

Fig. 9 shows a flow chart of a preferred embodiment of the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PRESENT INVENTION

The present invention, termed "Dry Printing Technology" (DPT), enables many new applications to surface. The central part of the new technology is to print an image with an optically clear ink through a single printing head followed by an applying of CLC pigments.

Fig. 1 shows an object 10 having a surface 12 covered with a prior art "paint layer" 14. The paint layer 14 generally comprises pigment particles 16 dispersed in a binder material 18.

Fig. 2 shows a paint layer like fig. 1 where the pigment material is in the form of flakes 20. The flakes 20 are shown randomly dispersed in the binder material 18. For reflective non metallic pigment particles like CLC flakes, multilayer polymer material flakes, or inorganic multilayer material flakes which have reflectivity by virtue of the interference effect of light reflection from a spatially varying index of refraction, the angle of viewing is critical, and no coherent effect is gained when the eye sees a large collection of pigment particles at may different angles. The use of CLC flakes is described in detail in copending Application Serial No. 08/787,282 entitled "Cholesteric Liquid Crystal Inks" by Sadeg M. Faris filed January 24, 1997, and in application Serial No. 07/798,881 entitled "Cholesteric Liquid Crystal Inks" by Sadeg M. Faris filed November 27, 1991, now US Patent No. 5,364,557. Multilayer polymer reflecting material in sheet form and flake form is well known, as are multilayer inorganic coating for reflective and

1 antireflective coatings optical substrates. The CLC flakes can be manufactured so that the pitch
of the helix of the CLC molecules is non-linear, as detailed in the above mentioned patent
applications, and so the flakes are broad band reflectors. In a similar way, the pitch of the
polymer and inorganic multilayer films can be changed throughout the films to produce broad
band reflecting flakes.

6 Fig 3. shows a flow chart of apparatus of the the invention. The Image Generator 30,
which may be a computer, photograph, silk screen, image plate, or manual drawing, provides the
information to be printed. The image is transmitted to a means for applying a binder material, or
the Binder Material Applicator module 32, which is one of the fundamental components of the
Dry Printing technology. Pictures or images are printed in the most preferred embodiment using a
11 transparent ink or binder material rather than a conventional colorant. Transparent binder
material allows the printing process to be repeated many times to build layers of different color
pigment material. An alternative embodiment allows use of a light absorbing binder material to
bind light reflective pigment particles. Light which is not reflected from the pigment particles
passes through the pigment particles and is absorbed in the light absorbing binder so that only the
16 color reflected from the pigment particles may be seen.

Equally important, the means for transparent ink or binder printing may employ techniques
from most printing technologies. For example, ink-jet, bubble jet, and laser printing, as well as
flexo press, off-set, gravure printing and silk screen printing may serve as the methods and
apparatus for transparent ink printing in module 32. However, minor changes and/or
21 modifications might be required to the pre-existing printing systems to account for transparent
ink printing conditions such as printing heat or environment. Printing with a binder or invisible
ink allows the use of pigment particles of any size, since the pigment particles do not have to pass
through the nozzles, screens, or other devices used to print normally. While particles and flakes
of less than 40 or 50 microns diameter give good resolution and pass through most printers
26 without clogging, larger pigments particles which may be used for special effects are difficult to
use.

Dry Pigment Application by module 34 is another central part of the unique dry printing
process. Before the invisible ink pattern provided by module 32 is completely cured, dry pigments

1 are applied by module 34 to the ink surface to cover the printed area. The dry pigments adhere to
the patterned surface in the pattern printed by the means for applying binder material 32. The dry
pigments may be removed from the surface which has no binder material by shaking, vacuuming,
or other standard way of removing dry powder from a surface. The dry pigments are, in the most
6 preferred embodiments, either commercially available, conventional absorptive pigments or the
novel non metallic reflecting CLC pigments or other iridescent flakes. Flakes of other absorptive
pigment materials are also anticipated by the inventors. The CLC flakes and other multilayer flakes
give spectacular reflective layer effects, and may also be used in transmission, for they transmit
those colors which they do not reflect. Other dry pigments are also anticipated by the inventors.
Dry pigment applicator 34 may contain multiple colorants, such as reflective red, green, blue, and
11 white (RGBW) pigments, which are applied onto a black surface; or, absorptive cyan, magenta,
yellow, and black (CMYB) pigments that are applied onto a white surface.

Furthermore, the applicator 34 may have another mechanism 35 to mechanically align
pigments, which is of great importance in the usage of CLC pigments or other pigments which are
in the form of flakes. As a result, all the dry flake pigments are uniformly oriented and layered on
16 the flat surface. The output device 36 allows for the visualization of the colorful image. The
output device 36 may also include a means for returning the object being printed to the binder
material applicator 32 to apply another pattern for another color pigment or for another
polarization reflecting pigment. The output device 36 may also have a device for applying a
protective coating to protect the binder layer and pigment layer or layers.

21 Figure 3 may also be used to describe a process whereby no image is printed in transparent
ink printing module 32, but a uniform coating of binder material is laid on a surface, such as the
surface of an automobile, and dry pigments are applied to the surface by device 34 to produce
striking effects using CLC pigment flakes. The CLC pigment flakes may be composed of two
layers, a left handed polarization layer and a right handed polarization layer, whereby light incident
26 on the flake is 100% reflected. Such flakes may be produced, for example, by coating a layer of
alignment material such as polyimide on to a flat surface, buffing the polyimide surface to produce
an aligned surface layer, deposition of a first polarization CLC coating on the aligned surface layer
to produce a reflector of light of a first polarization, and immediately depositing a layer of a second

1 polarization CLC material on to the first polarization CLC coating. The top surface of the first
polarization CLC coating is itself aligned and will force the second polarization CLC coating to
align and act as a reflector for light of the second polarization. Thereafter the first polarization and
second polarization coatings are removed in the form of flakes which are reflective of both
polarizations.

6 Figure 3 may also be used to describe a process whereby a uniform coating of binder
material is laid on a surface in transparent ink printing module 32, and dry pigments are applied to
the surface in a pattern in module 34. The pattern is then fixed by fusing or otherwise curing the
binder material.

11 Fig. 4 shows an object 10 which has a binder coating 40 applied to the surface 12 of the
object. Pigment flakes 20 have been applied to the surface of the binder coating 40, and are being
rolled or buffed by the object 42 so that the pigment flakes 20 lie substantially parallel with the
surface 12 of the object 10.

16 Fig. 5 shows the result of the preparation of fig. 4 when another layer 50 of material is
applied over the flakes 20 and binder material 40 as a protective layer. It is an embodiment of the
invention to have either the binder material 40 or the material of protective layer 50 or both have
an index of refraction equal to the mean index of refraction of the flakes 20. In this way, light will
not scatter from the edges of the flakes 20 and wash out the iridescent effects gained by the
interference of light within the flakes 20.

21 Fig. 6 shows an alternative embodiment of the invention where the flakes 20 are electrically
charged and caused to lay down on the surface of the binder material by an electrical field at the
surface of the binder material 40. If the dimensions of flakes 20 are sufficiently large compared to
the thickness of flakes 20, the flakes will lie down substantially parallel to the surface 12. Such
techniques allow the use of flakes 20 with large length and width dimensions compared with the
thickness of the flakes 20. A brilliant sparkling effect is created when flakes 20 are larger than 100
26 microns. Even more preferred are flakes with mean transverse dimensions greater than 150
microns.

Fig. 7 is a flow chart of the method of the invention. Step 70 involves applying a binder
material to the surface of the object. The binder material may be patterned or unpatterned. In a

1 preferred embodiment, the binder material is applied as a liquid in a pattern, and the dry pigment
material is applied in step 74 directly to the patterned binder material while the binder material is
wet. The dry pigment sticks to the wet binder material, and may be shaken off or otherwise
removed from the surface of the object where no binder material has been applied. In a preferred
embodiment, the pigment material is rolled or buffed in step 76 to align the pigment material flakes
6 parallel to the surface of the object. In another preferred embodiment, the binder material may be
dry, and the surface prepared in step 72 in a pattern by applying a solvent material such as water to
the surface in a pattern so that the pigment material sticks in a pattern. In another embodiment,
the surface of the object may be coated with a binder material that may be fused, like a wax. The
binder material is fused in a pattern and the pigment material applied so that the pigment material
11 sticks to the fused binder material. In another embodiment, the binder material may be coated with
dry pigment first, and the binder material fused or coated with a solvent to "fix" the pigment
material in a pattern. It is generally preferred that the dry pigment material is not fused in the
fixing operation of fusing the binder material. A final step involves applying a protective coating in
step 78. The protective coating may be transparent, or may be colored for special effects. The
16 index of refraction of the protective coating 78 may match the mean index of refraction of the
flakes in order to cut down scattering from the edges of the flakes. The index of refraction of the
binder material may also match the mean index of refraction of the flakes for the same reason.

Fig. 8 is a flow chart of a preferred embodiment of the invention where a binder material is
coated on the surface of an object in step 80, and then flakes of pigment are deposited in a pattern.
21 Such flakes can be deposited by electrostatic means as in a xerographic photocopier, for example.
After the flakes are deposited in step 82, the surface of the object may be worked by rolling or
buffing to align the flakes parallel to the surface as shown in step 84. The flakes may be firmly
adhered to the surface in step 86 by treating the surface with a solvent or by fusing the binder
material. Once again, the surface may be protected by applying a protective layer in step 88.

26 Fig. 9 shows a flow chart of a preferred embodiment of the invention, in that the steps of
the previous embodiments discussed above may be repeated in steps 90, 92, 94, 96 and 99 for
different colors of pigments or different polarization reflection characteristics of pigments. The
decision step 98 sends the system back around the loop until the required multiple color or multiple

1 dimension image is complete.

The following is a detailed description encompassing specific applications of transparent printing as well as pigment application utilized in present printing technology processes. RGBW colorants will be used in the discussion, however, cyan, magenta, yellow and black (CMYB) colorants are also applicable.

6 1. DPT via Printing Screen

In this technology, the printing screen carries the image to be printed. One screen is needed for each one color printing. To print colorful image, four screens are needed that represent red, green, blue, and white (RGBW) colorants. For printing in 3-D using RGBW CLC colorants, eight screens are then needed. The first four (RGBW) are for the right image perspective, and the
11 other four (RGBW) for the left image perspective. Typically, reflective pigments are applied to a black background which absorbs all the light which is not reflected, while absorptive pigments are applied to a white background which reflects all light which is not absorbed.

To print single color pictures, the optically clear ink image is printed onto the substrate through the screen. Before the ink has completely dried, CLC pigments are spread onto the surface of the
16 carrier followed by a mechanical alignment brush. If necessary, a top coating will be applied to protect the image.

To print full color image, RGBW is printed in an arbitrary sequence. For example, the red image is printed in transparent ink onto the carrier through the "red color" screen. Then red CLC pigments are applied. Next, after the red image has completely dried, the green image is printed
21 using the appropriate image screen and green CLC pigments are applied. The same procedure is then applied to printing the blue and white images.

To print colorful image in three dimensions, the above procedure is repeated for both left and right image perspectives with left and right handed RGBW CLC pigments.

2. DPT via Painting Brush/Spray

26 This technology is particularly important in, but not limited to, painting an object such as an automobile. First of all, a carrier (such as a primer etc.) is painted onto an object via sprayer or brush. Before the carrier dries, the CLC pigments are spread onto the object followed by mechanical brushing to orient the CLC pigments. Finally, a protective coating is applied over the

1 CLC paint if necessary.

This method can also be used to paint colorful pictures in 3-D in large size. The procedure is very similar to the screen printing technology described above.

3. DPT via Xerox/Laser Printer

6 The existing photo xerography and laser printing technologies can be modified to use the CLC pigments as their colorants. In these processes, the black carbon toner is replaced with CLC pigments. As experimentally proven, CLC pigments can be easily charged via static electric field, which is a necessary condition for Xerox and laser printing. In contrast to the xerography process, the pigment particles are not fused to the uncoated paper, but the non-fusible pigment particles which are deposited on a binder coated paper are fixed to the paper by fusing, for example, the
11 binder material. The sheet being printed is stable after one color is printed, and may be sent through the same or another xerography process to add other colors or other polarization CLC flakes to the partially printed sheet.

4. DPT via Ink Jet Printer/Bubble Jet Printer

16 The same principal is applied in this case as in the screen-printing. The image is printed using the clear carrier through the ink jet or bubble jet printer. Then, the CLC pigments are applied before the carrier is dried followed by a mechanical brushing for alignment. The same procedure as with screen-printing is applied for printing full color pictures as well as color 3-D images.

5. DPT via Wax Printer

21 First, the wax binder layer, which may be coated on a thin film or on a paper sheet, is thermally melted. Then, the CLC pigments are sprayed onto the "wet" wax surface followed by a mechanical brush before the wax solidifies. In an alternative embodiment, the CLC pigments are deposited in a pattern and aligned on wax which is coated onto a thin film. RGB and White CLC wax foils are prepared in a similar way. The image may be transferred from a foil to paper by
26 pressing the foil and paper together and heating to transfer the wax and the pigment from the foil to the paper surface. Therefore, an image is printed. If RGB and white wax foils are made with left and right handed CLC pigments separately, then colorful 3-D printing will be achieved via this technology.

1 6. DPT via Off-set Printer and Gravure Printer

A similar technique used for screen printing can be used in off-set printing technology as well. Image is first printed with the clear carrier. Then CLC pigments of one color are sprayed and brushed before the carrier is completely dried. Also, the 3-D picture can be printed with the left and right handed CLC pigments.

6 7. DPT on Pre-treated Substrates

This method applies to all the printing technologies mentioned above. Rather than printing images with a clear carrier, which is either thermally or photon curable, this technique prints the image with a solvent or a solution, which reacts with pre-coated surface on the substrate. For example, the solvent can be water and the agent that is pre-coated on the substrate surface is polyvinyl alcohol (PVA). It is well known that PVA is dissolvable into water. In this particular case, image is printed onto the substrate surface with the water through the printer head. Before the water dries, the CLC pigments are sprayed and brushed. This principle can be further

generalized to create colorful pictures by screen printing, off-set, Gravure, ink jet, bubble jet, Xerox or laser printing and even in 3-D. In addition, this method is also suitable for painting.

Further generalization of this technology can yield another method. The object to be painted is first wholly painted with a wet carrier that might be thermally or UV curable. Then, a pattern is printed with a fast drying coating through a printing device. The area covered by this coating is no longer sticky to the CLC pigments. However, the remaining area where not covered with such coating can still adhere to the CLC pigments. Therefore, image is created. This method is then termed as "negative" as compared to the previous methods.

Furthermore, the new printing technologies can be generalized to the situation where ordinary absorptive CMYB pigments are used instead of the CLC pigments.

Applications of the new invention

There are many applications that may be explored using this new printing technology. A first application is in automobile painting. Using the new painting technology, CLC pigments can be painted flat onto an automobile body such that a color change occurs when viewing angle changes.

1 A second important application is security printing. CLC pigments are printed flat using
the new technology to ensure a color change versus the viewing angle. This characteristic is
difficult to counterfeit. In addition, the security pattern will change when viewed with circular
polarizing filters. Of great interest in this area is the usage of IR CLC pigments which are
particularly suitable for machine vision application.

6 A third application is in general painting using CLC or multilayer organic or inorganic
reflective pigments as the colorant for decoration as well as for energy saving. Since the light
energy is not absorbed, but reflected, less energy will be used for air conditioning in a house
painted with reflective paint.

11 A fourth application is in cosmetics. CLC pigments used as finger nail polish, skin
colorants, and eyeshadow offer spectacular effects. In particular, binder material applied first to a
fingernail, then flakes which are rubbed to align them are very effective. Very large flakes of about
100 or 150 microns give a striking "glitter" effect. One other example is the use of such reflective
pigments in sunblock. Multilayer flakes with a non-linear pitch may reflect a broad band of
wavelengths, and in particular block ultraviolet light in the UVA and UVB bands. Normal
16 sunblock lotion uses organic molecules to absorb the ultraviolet light, but the bandwidth of such
molecules is normally too small to effectively block both the UVA and UVB bands. Pigment
materials such as zinc oxide and titanium dioxide are very white, and are not appealing.
Broadband reflecting flakes, however, reflect the ultraviolet light and are colorless in the visible
spectrum. Such broadband reflecting flakes may also reflect the infrared light as well and lead to a
21 cooling effect when the infrared rays of the sun are reflected from the skin instead of absorbed by
the skin. Flakes of such broadband ultraviolet and infrared reflecting characteristics and visible
transmitting characteristics are anticipated by the inventors.

The methods noted above are examples which may be generalized by one of skill in the art
to provide many additional embodiments which are anticipated by the inventors.

26 Obviously, many modifications and variations of the present invention are possible in light
of the above teachings. It is therefore to be understood that, within the scope of the appended
claims, the invention may be practiced otherwise than as specifically described.